

Charles Webster

ISSN 0003-4827

No known copyright restrictions.

Recommended Citation

"Charles Webster." *The Annals of Iowa* 20 (1936), 474-475.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.5901>

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](#)

AARON V. PROUDFOOT was born at Liberty, Clarke County, Iowa, June 13, 1862, and died at a hospital in Des Moines June 7, 1936. Burial was at Indianola. His parents were Jacob and Cyrena (Van Scoy) Proudfoot. His early education was obtained in public school near his home. In 1881 he entered Simpson College, Indianola, as a student, and at the same time obtained a position in the law and abstract office of Edward Hall and E. W. Hartman, Indianola, and was thus able to pay his own way through college during the next three years, and on leaving school was employed by them to handle their abstract business. In 1892 he was elected clerk of District Court of Warren County and held that position six years, during which time he pursued the study of law and was admitted to practice October 5, 1898. He began practice at that time in Indianola and continued it until his death. When a young man he was for four years chairman of the Republican County Central Committee. He was city solicitor of Indianola several years, and was secretary of the school board. He was presidential elector from the Seventh District in 1904 when Theodore Roosevelt was elected. In 1908 he was elected senator from the Clarke-Warren District and served in the Thirty-third and Thirty-fourth general assemblies. In 1912 he was a candidate in primary election for the Republican nomination for governor, George W. Clarke and Perry G. Holden also being candidates, Mr. Clarke winning the nomination and the subsequent election. In 1916 he was again elected senator and served in the Thirty-seventh and Thirty-eighth general assemblies. In the latter he was chairman of Judiciary Committee Number 2. For years he was prominently connected with the Ancient Order of United Workmen lodge, and was grand master of the Iowa jurisdiction. He was active in local church and Sunday school work and was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal church of Indianola throughout most of his active life. He was an alternate lay delegate to General Conference of the church in 1920, and a delegate in 1924 and 1928. In 1920 the General Conference created the World Service Commission and Mr. Proudfoot was made a member of it. Its duties include arranging the budget for the church activities, amounting to millions of dollars annually. Of the originally appointed members, thirty-five in number, Mr. Proudfoot was the only one present at the meeting at Columbus last May. He was and had been for years chairman of the Board of Trustees of Simpson College, often carrying much responsibility. He was an able lawyer, an able and effective public speaker, a wise legislator, a churchman of more than local and state influence, and a citizen of great usefulness.

CHARLES WEBSTER was born at Waucoma, Fayette County, Iowa, May 18, 1859, and died at Waucoma July 31, 1936. Burial was in the cemetery at that place. His parents were Joseph P. and Phoebe A. Webster. He received his schooling in public schools of Waucoma, spent a year as a student in the law office of Ainsworth & Hobson of West Union,

and followed that by teaching school at Eldorado and at Fort Atkinson. While teaching at the latter town he learned telegraphy of his brother, Ace Webster, who was station agent and telegraph operator there. When the Milwaukee road was built through Waucoma in 1882 he was appointed agent and operator there. He subsequently entered into partnership with his brother Ace in the lumber and coal and other lines of business. As dealers in lumber they developed an extended line of lumber yards. The two brothers continued together and for some fifty years operated in different enterprises. Charles Webster was one of the first men in his section to recognize the importance of the telephone and for twenty years was busy in organizing, building and developing telephone properties, not only in northern Iowa but in near-by states. He was a delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1908, but was evidently too much engrossed in business to seek office. During the fall of 1917 there developed, especially in northern Iowa, an acute shortage of coal. The railroads and many manufacturing concerns were consuming the coal as they were working feverishly because of increased demands brought on by the war, so local coal dealers found it almost impossible to get coal orders filled. A federal fuel administration was formed and late in September state administrators were appointed. Mr. Webster was already a member and treasurer of the Iowa State Council of Defense, and on its recommendation and that of Governor Harding, he was appointed by the Federal Government fuel administrator for Iowa. His efficiency in railroad and shipping affairs becoming so apparent Governor Harding appointed him November 5, 1917, a member of the Iowa Railroad Commission to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Edward D. Chassell. In 1918 he was elected, and was three times re-elected, serving seventeen years, retiring in December, 1934. In 1929 he was honored with the office of president of the National Association of Railroad and Utilities Commissions. He was a popular and efficient official.

LOUIS J. MURPHY was born in Dubuque, Iowa, November 6, 1875, and died July 16, 1936, because of an automobile accident near Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, death occurring on the way to a hospital in that city. Burial was at Mount Olivet Cemetery, Dubuque. His parents were John S. and Ann White Murphy. He secured his education in public schools in Dubuque. His father was editor of the *Dubuque Telegraph*, and Louis having ambition to enter the same work, began when only a lad by acting as carrier boy for daily papers in his home city, and when having completed two years of high school he struck out for himself and obtained a job as reporter on the *Galena (Illinois) Gazette*. Two years later he returned to Dubuque and accepted a position on the news staff of the *Dubuque Times-Journal*. He there established himself as a successful newspaper writer. When he was only twenty-six years old, in 1902, his father suddenly died. John S. Murphy had won high reputation as the able and brilliant editor of the *Dubuque*

Copyright of *Annals of Iowa* is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.